

GENE TAYLOR
4TH DISTRICT, MISSISSIPPI

COMMITTEE ON ARMED SERVICES

CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON SEAPOWER AND
EXPEDITIONARY FORCES

COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION
AND INFRASTRUCTURE

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Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515-2404

August 16, 2010

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The Honorable Linda M. Springer
Director
Office of Personnel Management
Theodore Roosevelt Federal Building
1900 E. Street, NW
Washington, DC 20415

Dear Director Springer:

I am writing in regards to the Armed Forces Retirement Home (AFRH) in Gulfport Mississippi.

I have been informed by former employees of the AFRH that their applications to be re-hired are being denied. I am writing to request that the Office of Personnel Management works with the Bureau of Public Debt and the AFRH to find a way to provide preference to former employees interested in getting their jobs back. I understand that there is a preference for former employees for up to two years under the rules established by the Office of Personnel Management. I would hope that the Office of Personnel Management would consider this two year preference from the time that the AFRH begins rehiring staff and not from the date of Hurricane Katrina in August of 2005 or the date for the Reduction in Force in 2006.

This facility was completely destroyed by Hurricane Katrina. It will be more than five years before the AFRH in Gulfport is opened and fully occupied with residents. Former employees should have a two year preference for being re-hired from when the facility is re-opened. I am requesting that the Office of Personnel Management consider giving these employees who wish to be re-hired by the AFRH in Gulfport a two year preference from the date that the facility begins to accept applications for staff.

While 15 of these employees were relocated to Washington, DC, the remaining AFRH staff were forced to find employment elsewhere. Employees at the time were told that they would have the opportunity to get their jobs back when the AFRH re-opened. Now that the AFRH is currently hiring staff and scheduled to open in the near future, I am requesting preference for the employees that are still interested in getting their jobs back.

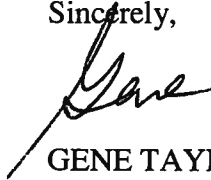
I understand that the Bureau of Public Debt is in charge of hiring for the AFRH in Gulfport, and I am sending them a similar letter requesting preference for former AFRH employees. I also realize that the AFRH operates under the rules and guidelines established by the Office of Personnel Management. However, Hurricane Katrina has provided a number of

challenges and created unique circumstances for Gulf Coast residents. The RIF that forced these workers out of their jobs is another classic example of these challenges that we have to continually work through. The usual standards applied by the Office of Personnel Management do not provide a way for these workers to regain their employment at the home.

I am requesting that the Armed Forces Retirement Home, the Bureau of Public Debt, and the Office of Personnel Management work together to find a way to provide preference to the displaced workers that want their jobs back. Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your response. If you have any additional questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Please do not hesitate to contact me or my office if you have any additional questions about this matter. Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your response on this issue.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gene", written over a diagonal line that extends from the bottom left towards the center.

GENE TAYLOR
Member of Congress

GT:emr